

but by cruelty of deepest dye. As the notion prevails amongst cat-stealers of the present day, that cat-skins are only good when torn from the poor animals alive ; so did the Romans eviscerate living swine, impelled by their savage gluttony. Like the Chinese of our own age, the ancient Romans were very partial to gelatinous and tenacious materials. Good flesh and bone they seem to have heeded little, if we may be guided by the statements handed down to us. I cannot say much in favour of Roman seasoning. Salt they used sparingly, and in like manner pepper ; but coriander, aniseed, and ginger were profusely employed ; and a compound of mustard with honey (there was no sugar then) appeared on every dinner-table of refinement. The most esteemed Roman sauce or condiment has yet to be mentioned. As we have our appetizing Worcester sauce, so had they their *garum*. Whether the latter would be congenial to modern tastes may be judged of, when the recipe for making it has been given. Intestines of fish closed up in an earthen jar, and buried in a dunghill until putrid—that was *garum*. You turn up your nose at it, no doubt,—but softly ! Russian caviare treads close upon the heels of *garum* ; and moulded cheese, so far as I can see, is not a long way behind. Strange to say, the Greeks, with all their ingenuity, never seem to have become celebrated as epicurean cooks. Amongst the Spartans simple eating was enjoined by legal enactments. Spartan black broth was the ordinary fare of that warlike people—nothing more nor less by the way than modern black-pudding, liquefied by mixture with boiling water. No one would have expected to find much epicureanism of any kind in Sparta ; but even the refined Athenians appear to have been in no way celebrated as cooks. Before bidding adieu to the culinary horrors of classical cookery altogether, I just bethink me of an anomaly worthy of being mentioned. The Romans liked *garum*, as we have seen ; and *garum*, it will be remembered, has the remotest possible affinity to fresh fish. Nevertheless, so particular were the Romans in the way of having their fish absolutely fresh, that epicures were in the habit of having sea-fish brought to them in sea-water living—to die, and be cooked, and, oh, folly !—eaten with *garum* sauce !

I wish it were in my power to bid adieu to the atrocious cruelties of Roman gluttony, and congratulate myself that we have nothing like it at the time in which I live. Few would eat London veal, if they only knew the cruelty involved in its manufacture (that is the word)—I never do ;—and as for the far-famed Strasburgh *pâté*, they are made of goose livers studiously enlarged by disease. I have never seen the process of goose training at Strasburgh, and therefore can testify nothing respecting it personally ; but I have heard and believe it to consist in nailing the geese by the webs of their feet to a plank lying before a fire, giving food in abundance, but nothing to drink. Under this treatment the liver becomes enormously enlarged.

Coming now to the gluttons who are neither gourmands nor gourmets ; men who feel an insatiable craving after quantity, not regarding much the quality of what they eat, those persons awaken pity even more than my disgust. Frequently this intense craving after food is accompanied with mental weakness, and the great

amount of physical strength. Gluttons, however, there are, both of antiquity and modern times, as strong as they are gluttonous. Milo is reported to have killed an ox with one blow of his fist, and eaten the animal afterwards. About the size of the ox we are told nothing, which renders my digestion of the tale more easy. I read quite a modern account the other day of a certain glutton in the north of India, who could readily eat two native sheep, besides stop-gaps and trimmings. A German glutton, mentioned in a thesis published at Wittemberg in 1757, ate up at one meal a sheep, a sucking pig, and sixty pounds of plums, stones and all ! Afterwards he carried four men on his shoulders for the distance of three miles. Towards the latter end of the last century, a Frenchman, named *Farare*, attracted much notice by his repulsive gluttony. When quite a lad, he swallowed a large basketful of apples : at another time, a heap of flints and corks. Being on one occasion an inmate of the Hotel Dieu, he tried to swallow the Doctor's watch and seals. In 1789, his daily allowance of meat was twenty-five pounds, when he could get it ; and get it somehow or other he would, even if dogs and cats were the victims of his gluttony. *Farare* having become a soldier, his appetite was regarded by the army surgeons as a veritable disease, for the treatment of which he was confined to hospital. The enormities to which his cravings there led him, I forbear to announce. Suffice it to indicate, amongst other things, that a child mysteriously disappeared ; and *Farare* was believed to have eaten it. Labouring under suspicion of this crime, *Farare* was chased away ; and, after a miserable existence of four years, he at last presented himself at the Hospice of Versailles as a patient. Strange to say, his gluttonous appetite had quite disappeared. He died at the early age of twenty-six. It may seem strange that *Farare* was thin, undersized, and not stronger than an ordinary man of his build and appearance. In point of fact he was weak. On one occasion, when campaigning in Germany, he came across the dinner prepared for fifteen German peasants, and swallowed it quite. At another time he ate thirty pounds of raw liver. Gluttons like *Farare* are to be pitied ; but nothing save reprobation have I for the sickening crew of epicurean gourmets and gourmands. Let no reader think, however, that I am an advocate for bad cookery. On the contrary, I look upon cookery as a rational science—one having for its object the turning to account of God's beneficent gifts with the least expenditure of nutrient matter, and the greatest assistance to digestion.

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### THE COLD EMBRACE.

BY M. E. BRADDON.

He was a student—such things as happened to him, happen sometimes to students.

He was a German—such things as happened to him, happen sometimes to Germans.

He was young, handsome, studious, enthusiastic, metaphysical, reckless, unbelieving, heartless.

And being young, handsome and eloquent, he was beloved.

He was an orphan, under the guardianship of his dead father's brother, his uncle Wilhelm, in

whose house he had been brought up from a little child ; and she who loved him was his cousin—his cousin Gertrude, whom he swore he loved in return.

Did he love her ? Yes, when he first swore it. But it soon wore out — this passionate love, how thread-bare and wretched a sentiment it grew to be at last in the selfish heart of the student. But in its first golden dawn, when he was only nineteen, and had just returned from the university, and they wandered together in the most romantic outskirts of the city, at rosy sunset, by holy moonlight, or bright and joyous morning, how beautiful a dream !

They keep it a secret from Wilhelm, as he has the father's ambition of a wealthy suitor for his only child—a cold and dreary vision beside the lover's dream.

So they are betrothed and standing side by side when the dying sun and the pale rising moon divide the heavens. He puts the betrothal ring upon her finger, the white and taper finger whose slender shape he knows so well. This ring is a peculiar one, a massive golden serpent, its tail in its mouth, the symbol of eternity ; it had been his mother's, and he would know it amongst a thousand. If he were to become blind to-morrow, he could select it from amongst a thousand by the touch alone.

He places it on her finger, and they swear to be true to each other for ever and ever—through trouble and danger—in sorrow and change—in wealth or poverty. Her father would be won to consent to their union by-and-bye, for they were now betrothed, and death alone could part them.

But the young student, the scoffer at revelation, yet the enthusiastic admirer of the mystical, asks—

"Can death part us ? I would return to you from the grave, Gertrude. My soul would come back to be near my love. And you—you, if you died before me, the cold earth would not hold you from me ; if you loved me, you would return, and again these fair arms would be clasped round my neck as they are now."

But she told him, with a holier light in her deep blue eyes than ever shone in his—she told him, that the dead who die at peace with God are happy in Heaven, and cannot return to the troubled earth ; and that it is only the suicide, the lost wretch on whom sorrowful angels shut the door of Paradise — whose unholy spirit haunts the footsteps of the living.

The first year of their betrothal is passed, and she is alone ; for he has gone to Italy, on a commission for some rich man, to copy a Raphael, or a Titian, or a Guido, in a gallery at Florence. He has gone to win fame, perhaps ; but it is not the less bitter—he is gone !

Of course her father misses his young nephew, who has been as a son to him ; and he thinks his daughter's sadness no more than a cousin should feel for a cousin's absence.

In the meantime, the weeks and months pass. The lover writes, often at first, then seldom—at last, not at all.

How many excuses she invents for him. How many times she goes to the distant little post-office, to which he is to address his letters. How many times she hopes, only to be disappointed. How many times she despairs, only to hope again.

But real despair comes at last, and will not be

put off any more. The rich suitor appears on the scene, and her father is determined. She is to marry at once. The wedding-day is fixed—the fifteenth of June.

The date seems burnt into her brain.

The date written in fire dances for ever before her eyes.

The date, shrieked by the Furies, sounds continually in her ears.

But there is time yet—it is the middle of May —there is time for a letter to reach him at Florence : there is time for him to come to Brunswick, to take her away and marry her in spite of her father—in spite of the whole world.

But the days and weeks fly by, and he does not write—he does not come. This is, indeed, despair which usurps her heart and will not be put away.

It is the fourteenth of June. For the last time to the little post-office ; for the last time she asks the old question, and they give her for the last time the dreary answer, "No ! no letter."

For the last time—for to-morrow is the day appointed for her bridal. Her father will hear no entreaties ; her rich suitor will not listen to her prayers. They will not be put off a day—an hour ; to-night alone is hers—this night, which she may employ as she will.

She takes another path than that which leads home ; she hurries through some by-streets of the city, out on to a lonely bridge, where he and she had stood so often in the sunset watching the rose-coloured light glow, fade, and die upon the river.

He returns from Florence. He had received her letter. That letter, blotted with tears, entreating, despairing—he had received it, but he loved her no longer. A young Florentine, who had sat to him for a model, had bewitched his fancy—that fancy which with him stood in place of a heart—and Gertrude had been half forgotten. If she had a richer suitor, good ! let her marry him ; better for her, better far for himself. He had no wish to fetter himself with a wife. Had he not his art always !—his eternal bride, his unchanging mistress.

Thus he thought it wiser to delay his journey to Brunswick, so that he should arrive when the wedding was over—arrive in time to salute the bride !

And the vows—the mystical fancies—the belief in his return, even after death, to the embrace of his beloved. Oh, gone out of his life ; melted away for ever, those foolish dreams of his boyhood !

So, on the fifteenth of June he enters Brunswick, by that very bridge on which she stood, the stars looking down on her, the night before. He strolls across the bridge and down by the water's edge, a great rough dog at his heels, and the smoke from his short meerschaum pipe curling in blue wreaths fantastical in the pure morning air. He has his sketch-book under his arm, and, attracted now and then by some object that catches his artist's eye, stops to draw. A few weeds and pebbles on the river's brink—a crag on the opposite shore—a group of pollard willows in the distance. When he has done he admires his drawing, shuts his sketch-book, empties the ashes from his pipe, refills from his tobacco-pouch, sings the refrain of a gay drinking song, calls to his dog, smokes again, and walks on.

Suddenly he opens his sketch-book again ; this time that which attracts him is a group of figures—but what is it ?

It is not a funeral, for there are no mourners.

It is not a funeral, but it is a corpse lying on a rude bier covered with an old sail, carried between two bearers.

It is not a funeral, for the bearers are fishermen—fishermen in their every-day garb.

About a hundred yards from him they rest their burden on a bank—one stands at the head of the bier, the other throws himself down at the foot of it.

And thus they form a perfect group ; he walks back two or three paces, selects his point of sight, and begins to sketch a hurried outline. He has finished it before they move ; he hears their voices, though he cannot hear their words, and wonders what they can be talking of. Presently he walks on, and joins them.

" You have a corpse there, my friends ? " he says.

" Yes ; a corpse washed ashore an hour ago."

" Drowned ! "

" Yes, drowned ;—a young girl, very handsome."

" Suicides are always handsome," he says ; and then he stands for a little while idly smoking and meditating, looking at the sharp outline of the corpse and the stiff folds of the rough canvas covering.

Life is such a golden holiday to him—young, ambitious, clever—that it seems as though sorrow and death could have no part in his destiny.

At last he says, that as this poor suicide is so handsome, he should like to make a sketch of her.

He gives the fishermen some money, and they offer to remove the sailcloth that covers her features.

No ; he will do it himself. He lifts the rough, coarse, wet canvas from her face. What face !

The face that shone on the dreams of his foolish boyhood. The face which once was the light of his uncle's home. His cousin Gertrude—his betrothed !

He sees, as in one glance, while he draws one breath, the rigid features—the marble arms—the hands crossed on the cold bosom ; and, on the third finger of the left hand, the ring which had been his mother's—the golden serpent ; the ring which, if he were to become blind, he could select from a thousand others by the touch alone.

But he is a genius and a metaphysician—grief, true grief is not for such as he. His first thought is flight—flight anywhere out of that accursed city—anywhere far from the brink of that hideous river—anywhere away from memory, away from remorse—anywhere to forget.

He is miles on the road that leads away from Brunswick before he knows that he has walked a step.

It is only when his dog lies down panting at his feet, that he feels how exhausted he is himself, and sits down upon a bank to rest. How the landscape spins round and round before his dazed eyes, while his morning's sketch of the two fishermen and the canvas-covered bier glares ready at him out of the twilight.

At last, after sitting a long time by the roadside, idly playing with his dog, idly smoking, idly lounging, looking as any innocent light-

hearted travelling student might look, yet all the while acting over that morning's scene in his burning brain a hundred times a minute,—at last he grows a little more composed, and tries presently to think of himself as he is, apart from his cousin's suicide. Apart from that, he was no worse off than he was yesterday. His genius was not gone ; the money he had earned at Florence still lined his pocket-book ; he was his own master, free to go whither he would.

And while he sits on the road-side, trying to separate himself from the scene of that morning—trying to put away the image of the corpse covered with the damp canvas sail—trying to think of what he should do next, where he should go, to be furthest away from Brunswick and remorse, the old Diligeance comes rumbling and jingling along. He remembers it ; it goes from Brunswick to Aix-la-Chapelle.

He whistles to his dog, shouts to the postillion to stop, and springs into the coupé.

During the whole evening, through the long night, though he does not once close his eyes, he never speaks a word ; but when morning dawns, and the other passengers awake and begin to talk to each other, he joins in the conversation. He tells them that he is an artist, that he is going to Cologne and to Antwerp to copy the Rubens. He remembered afterwards that he talked and laughed boisterously, and that when he was talking and laughing loudest, a passenger, older and graver than the rest, opened the window near him, and told him to put his head out. He remembered the fresh air blowing in his face, the singing of the birds in his ears, and the flat fields and road-side reeling before his eyes. He remembered this, and then falling in a heap on the floor of the Diligeance.

It is a fever that keeps him for six long weeks laid on a bed at an hotel in Aix-la-Chapelle.

He gets well, and, accompanied by his dog, starts on foot for Cologne. By this time he is his former self once more. Again the blue smoke from his short meerschaum, curls upwards in the morning air—again he sings some old university drinking song—again stops here and there, meditating and sketching.

He is happy, and has forgotten his cousin—and so, on to Cologne.

It is by the great Cathedral he is standing, with his dog at his side. It is night, the bells have just chimed the hour, and the clocks are striking eleven ; the moonlight shines full upon the magnificent pile, over which the artist's eye wanders, absorbed in the beauty of form.

He is not thinking of his drowned cousin, for he has forgotten her and is happy.

Suddenly some one—something from behind him, puts two cold arms round his neck, and clasps its hands on his breast.

And yet there is no one behind him, for on the flags bathed in the broad moonlight there are only two shadows, his own and his dog's. He turns quickly round—there is no one—nothing to be seen in the broad square but himself and his dog ; and though he feels, he cannot see the cold arms clasped round his neck.

It is not ghostly, this embrace, for it is palpable to the touch—it cannot be real, for it is impalpable to the sight.

He tries to throw off the cold arms. He clasps the hands in his own to tear them asunder, and to

cast them off his neck. He can feel the long delicate fingers cold and wet beneath his touch, and on the third finger of the left hand he can feel the ring which was his mother's—the golden serpent—the ring which he has always said he would know among a thousand by the touch alone. He knows it now!

His dead cousin's cold arms are round his neck—his dead cousin's wet hands are clasped upon his breast. He will die! He will go mad! "Up, Leo!" he shouts. "Up, up, boy!" and the Newfoundland leaps to his shoulders—the dog's paws are on the dead hands, and the animal utters a terrible howl, and springs away from his master.

The student stands in the moonlight, the dead arms round his neck, and the dog at a little distance moaning piteously.

Presently a watchman, alarmed by the howling of the dog, comes into the square to see what is wrong.

In a breath the cold arms are gone.

He takes the watchman home to the hotel with him and gives him money; in his gratitude he could have given the man half his little fortune.

Will it ever come to him again, this embrace of the dead?

He tries never to be alone; he makes a hundred acquaintances, and shares the chamber of another student. He starts up if he is left by himself in the public room at the inn where he is staying, and runs into the street. People notice his strange actions, and begin to think that he is mad.

But, in spite of all, he is alone once more, for one night the public room being empty for a moment, when on some idle pretence he strolls into the street, the street is empty too, and for the second time he feels the cold arms round his neck, and for the second time when he calls his dog the animal slinks away from him with a piteous howl.

After this he leaves Cologne, still travelling on foot—for economy now, as his money is getting low. He joins travelling hawkers, he walks side by side with labourers, he talks to every foot-passenger he falls in with, and tries from morning till night to get company on the road.

At night he sleeps by the fire in the kitchen of the inn at which he stops, but do what he will he is often alone, and it is now an old thing for him to feel the cold arms round his neck.

Many months have passed since his cousin's death,—autumn, winter, early spring. His money is nearly gone, his health is utterly broken, he is the shadow of his former self, and he is getting near Paris. He will reach that city at the time of the Carnival. To this he looks forward. In Paris, in Carnival time, he need never surely be alone, never feel that deadly caress; he might even recover his lost gaiety, his lost health, once more resume his profession, once more earn fame and money by his art.

How hard he tries to get over the distance that divides him from Paris, while day by day he grows weaker and weaker, and his step more slow and heavy.

But there is an end at last; the long and dreary roads are passed. This is Paris, which he enters for the first time—Paris, of which he has dreamed so much—Paris, whose million voices are to exorcise his phantom.

To him, to-night, Paris seems one vast chaos of lights, music, and confusion—lights which dance

before his eyes and will not be still—music that rings in his ears and deafens him—confusion which makes his head whirl round and round.

But in spite of all, he finds the opera-house, where there is a masked ball. He has enough money left to buy a ticket of admission, and to hire a domino to throw over his shabby dress. It seems only a moment after his entering the gates of Paris, that he is in the very midst of the wild gaiety of the opera-house ball.

No more darkness, no more loneliness, but a mad crowd, shouting and dancing, and a lovely Débardeur hanging on his arm.

The boisterous gaiety he feels surely is his old light-heartedness come back. He hears the people round him talking of the outrageous conduct of some drunken student, and it is to him they point when they say this—to him, who has not moistened his lips since yesterday at noon—for even now he will not drink; though his lips are parched, and his throat burning, he cannot drink. His voice is thick and hoarse, and his utterance indistinct, but still this must be his old light-heartedness come back that makes him so wildly gay.

The little Débardeur is wearied out—her arm rests on his shoulder heavier than lead—the other dancers one by one drop off.

The lights in the chandeliers one by one die out. The decorations look pale and shadowy in that dim light that is neither night nor day.

A faint glimmer from the dying lamps, a pale streak through the half-open shutters of cold grey light from the new-born day.

And by this light the bright-eyed Débardeur fades sadly. He looks her in the face. How the brightness of her eyes dies out. Again he looks her in the face. How white that face has grown. Again—and now it is the shadow of a face alone that looks in his.

Again—and they are gone—the bright eyes—the face—the shadow of the face. He is alone, alone in that vast saloon.

Alone, and in the terrible silence he hears the echoes of his own footsteps in that dismal dance which has no music.

No music, but the beating of his heart against his breast. For the cold arms are round his neck—they whirl him round, they will not be flung off, or cast away, he can no more escape from their icy grasp than he can escape from death. He looks behind him—there is nothing but himself in the great empty hall; but he can feel—cold, deathlike, but oh, how palpable—the long slender fingers, and the ring which was his mother's.

He tries to shout, but he has no power in his burning throat. The silence of the place is only broken by the echoes of his own footsteps in the dance from which he cannot extricate himself. Who says he has no partner? The cold hands are clasped on his breast, and now he does not shun their caress. No! One more polka if he drops down dead!

The lights are all out, and half-an-hour after, the gendarmes come in with a lantern to see that the house is empty; they are followed by a great dog that they have found seated howling on the steps of the theatre. Near the principal entrance they stumble over—

The body of a student who has died from want of food, exhaustion, and the breaking of a blood-vessel.

Original from